

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A projector, comprising:
  - an illumination device to emit illumination light;
  - spatial light modulation devices illuminated with illumination light emitted from the illumination device;
  - a projection optical system to project image light emitted from the spatial light modulation devices;
  - a flat and rectangular screen onto which the image light passing through the projection optical system is projected; and
  - a polarizing device to make the image light emitted from the spatial light modulation devices incident on the screen so as to serve as linearly polarized light having a polarization azimuth along a predetermined direction except for the short direction of the screen.
2. The projector according to Claim 1, the polarizing device making the image light emitted from the spatial light modulation devices incident on the screen so as to serve as linearly polarized light having a polarization azimuth along the longitudinal direction of the screen.
3. The projector according to Claim 1, the screen being a rear projection screen including a Fresnel lens portion disposed at the incident side thereof and a diffusing screen portion disposed at the exit side thereof.
4. The projector according to Claim 1, the polarizing device including polarization filters disposed at the exit sides of the corresponding spatial light modulation devices.
5. The projector according to Claim 1, the projection optical system including an L-shaped optical unit to bend a light path, including a pair of lens groups and reflecting device interposed therebetween.
6. A projector, comprising:
  - an illumination device to emit illumination light;
  - spatial light modulation devices illuminated with illumination light emitted from the illumination device;
  - a projection optical system including an L-shaped optical unit to bend a light path, having a pair of lens groups and reflecting device interposed therebetween and which projects image light emitted from the spatial light modulation devices via the optical unit; and

a screen onto which the image light passing through the projection optical system is projected.

7. The projector according to Claim 6, the screen being a rear projection screen, and the optical unit directly focuses the image light emitted from the spatial light modulation devices onto the screen.

8. The projector according to Claim 6, the optical unit having an optical axis bent on a vertically extending plane orthogonal to the screen.

9. The projector according to Claim 8, the illumination device disposed such that the optical axis of a lamp serving as a light source to generate illumination light lies horizontally.

10. The projector according to Claims 1, the exit-side optical axis of the projection optical system being orthogonalized to a surface of the screen extending along the central part of the screen.

11. The projector according to Claim 1, further comprising:

a color modulation device including the spatial light modulation devices for corresponding colors, each device being illuminated with corresponding illumination light emitted from the illumination device; and a light-separation modulation device which includes a light-synthesizing member to synthesize corresponding kinds of color image light emitted from the color modulation device and which emits the synthesized image light,

the projection optical system projecting the image synthesized with the light-synthesizing member onto the screen.